The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1727 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MAY 16, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 20

FACING *the* FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

The latest—and most farcical—attempt to abolish the poll tax by legislative enactment of Congress has now been defeated.

We say "farcical" because of the blatant hypocrisy of the entire proceedings. Both sides—the advocates and opponents—share the blame. Never have we seen a more praiseworthy objective more thoroughly done to death by the questionable motives of some of its supporters. Never have we seen a more disgusting disregard of democratic processes than was evidenced by the bill's opponents.

As conditions stood, there was not the slightest chance of favorable Senate action on the measure when it was brought up for debate. Then why was it pushed at this particular time?

One reason was that certain groups of professional politicians hoped to gain political capital out of the foredoomed effort in the coming elections.

The other reason is that, unfortunately, the Communists got active in the fight and gave the anti-poll tax bill the kiss of death. Whether they cared particularly about getting it passed is open to doubt. Their chief interest was to become identified as the champions of the American Negro.

Sordid Political Gang

Now let us take up the opponents of the bill. Among them, unquestionably, were some who sincerely doubted the advisability of seeking to abolish the poll tax through legislation instead of Constitutional amendment. These we cannot censure.

But for the gang of Southern politicians who are desperately anxious to keep themselves in office by denying the right to vote to millions of their impoverished constituents, we entertain nothing but the utmost contempt.

Just look at the facts. In the six Southern States which still maintain the poll tax less than 5 per cent of the population voted in the last Congressional elections. In one of these States, South Carolina, the figure was around 1 per cent. On the other hand, according to Columnist Marquis Childs, 86 per cent of the population in Illinois voted in the same elections and 38 per cent in Indiana.

These figures show how the poll tax makes a mockery of democracy and the right to vote.

It is a mistake to assume that only Negroes are disfranchised by the poll tax. Many white citizens of the South are deprived of their right to vote by this un-American tax. Furthermore, it presents opportunities to machine politicians to buy votes by paying the poll tax of their supporters.

These circumstances have the Southern politicians making politics in the South a dirtier game than was ever practiced by Tammany Hall in its heyday. They have enabled professional Southern politicians to get re-elected almost automatically and to gain positions of power and prestige in Congress through seniority. Thus the effects of the poll tax are not limited to the six States where it still exists but oppress the entire nation.

For An Amendment

In analyzing the latest defeat of the efforts to end the poll tax evil, the New York Times in an editorial comes to the conclusion that the wisest course to pursue now is to press for a Constitutional amendment to accomplish the same purpose as the blocked legislation.

Somewhat reluctantly, we are beginning to share the same belief. The process of adopting an amendment to the Constitution is, of course, a slow one, but the job of getting an anti-poll tax bill through Congress, we are now convinced, would take even longer.

One advantage of the amendment method is that many sincere opponents of the poll tax, who object to curing it through legislation, would join forces with the majority of the American people and the majority of the members of Congress who have been battling to abolish it by a shortcut.

Thus, it would become comparatively easy to obtain the assent of two-thirds of both houses of Congress for the adoption of the amendment and ratification by three-fourths of the States.

The time to begin this fight is right now. Delay will injure America in its post-war effort. Poll tax Senators and Congressmen have almost invariably been a stumbling block to the enactment of progressive legislation needed to strengthen the weak spots in our domestic economy.

In order to stir up greater public interest in the problem and to expose the evils of the disfranchisement of millions of citizens in a democracy, we wish to make a novel suggestion. We propose that the House Committee on Un-American Activities begin an immediate investigation of the operations of the poll tax.

EASTERN LABOR PRESS TO HOLD CONVENTION

Newark, N. J.—The Eastern Labor Press Conference will hold its third annual convention at the Military Park here on May 27 and 28. Many leaders in labor and government have been invited to attend.

The annual awards of merit for outstanding journalism in the labor press will be announced at the convention.

MORE CHEMICAL WORKERS CHOOSE AFL UNION

Harriman, N. Y.—Another election at a chemical plant was won by the AFL when the NLRB conducted a collective bargaining representation poll among the employes of the Pittsburgh Consolidation Coal Co. Corp. here. An overwhelming majority of the employes voted for AFL Chemical Workers Union No. 22553.

AFL Is Preparing To Issue Charters To Three New International Unions

Philadelphia.—The American Federation of Labor plans to issue charters to 3 new international unions in the near future, President William Green revealed at the close of the Executive Council meeting here.

The proposed new unions comprise the chemical workers, office workers, and fabricated metal workers.

At the same time, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany announced that the dues-paid membership of the American Federation of Labor reached the all-time high of 6,606,173 as of April 30, a gain of 546,485 members in the past 8 months.

Mr. Green said that the charters would be granted to the new international unions as soon as a few jurisdictional matters are straightened out. He expressed the hope that the charters would be issued before the next convention of the AFL in November.

Before adjourning, the Executive Council adopted a resolution favoring that more than 1,900 of its members reduction of the cabaret tax from 20 per cent to 10 per cent. The high tax, the council was informed, has hurt cabaret and night-club business to such an extent that thousands of entertainers and catering employes have been thrown out of work.

The Executive Council also called upon the Order of Railway Telegraphers to abandon its injunction suit against the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks. The litigation involves a jurisdictional dispute between the two unions. The Council declared the matter should be referred to the American Federation of Labor adjustment and decision in accordance with the laws of the Federation.

The Executive Council decided to support the complaint of the Seafarers International Union against the action of the War Shipping Administration in reducing bonus payments to sailors who are asked to take ships into hazardous waters. Harry Lundeberg, president of the union, told the Council that more than 1,900 of its members had been killed by enemy action since Pearl Harbor.

Green Asks Roosevelt To Back Plan Creating "Free Ports" For Refugees

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green appealed to President Roosevelt to support the proposal for the creation of "free ports" in America to which refugees from Hitler's wrath may find temporary refuge until the war is won.

In his letter to the President, Mr. Green said:

"Permit me to call your attention to a resolution adopted by the American Federation of Labor at its last convention which was held during October 1943. As you will no doubt recall, the millions of men and women who compose the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor membership went on record urging the United States to grant at least temporary asylum to the victims of Hitler's bestial persecution. The term 'free port' has been coined at that time but the sentiment of the membership was and is nonetheless synonymous with the proposal.

"I quote the following section from Resolution No. 71 which was adopted at the convention: 'To this end, the American Federation of Labor calls upon the United Nations to take immediate steps to rescue the remaining Jews of occupied Europe. We call upon the United Nations, and our own country, to provide for them temporary havens in their territories.'

"I am writing at this time because I have learned that the War Refugee Board which was established recently is interested in what is referred to as the 'free port' plan. Please be advised that I fully and unreservedly support this program of rescue for refugees. I urge you to effect the realization of this humanitarian measure, which is really a small undertaking for a nation as great as ours. We are feeding, clothing and housing over 130,000 captured Nazis while at the same time we have made no move in the direction of alleviating the suffering of even a small fraction of that number of victims of the Nazis.

"I understand that tiny Switzerland, despite its neutrality and hazardous geographical position on the map of Europe, has welcomed to its territory a far greater number of men and women driven out by the Nazis than might be expected of her. These refugees live in camps and are permitted much more freedom of movement than the original 'free port' suggestion calls for.

"I am proud to know that a great many newspapers in our country have published editorials supporting this proposal. It is encouraging to note that the carnage in which mankind at present finds itself engaged on a world-wide scale has not lessened the American's traditional sympathetic and humane attitude toward his fellow men.

"I urge you, Mr. President, in my own name and in the name of all the members of the American Federation of Labor to cause the creation of 'free ports' in this country for refugee victims of the present war—now, before it is too late. Such action on your part, I believe, will clear the way or similar action in other parts of the Allied and neutral world."

ILO Adopts Broad Charter Of Social, Economic Goals

Text of Philadelphia Charter

Philadelphia.—Following is the text of the Philadelphia Charter as adopted by the International Labor Conference:

The general conference of the International Labor Organization, meeting in its twenty-sixth session in Philadelphia, hereby adopts, this tenth day of May in the year nineteen hundred and forty-four, the present declaration of the aims and purposes of the International Labor Organization and of the principles which should inspire the policy of its members.

I

The conference reaffirms the fundamental principles on which the organization is based and, in particular, that:

(a) Labor is not a commodity;

(b) Freedom of expression and of association are essential to sustained progress;

(c) Poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere;

(d) The war against want requires to be carried on with unrelenting vigor within each nation, and by continuous and concerted international effort in which the representatives of workers and employers, enjoying equal status with those of governments, join with them in free discussion and democratic decision with a view to the promotion of the common welfare.

II

Believing that experience has fully demonstrated the truth of the statement in the preamble to the constitution of the International Labor Organization that lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice, the conference affirms that:

(a) All human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursuit of both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity;

(b) The attainment of the conditions in which this shall be possible must constitute the central aim of national and international policy;

(c) All national and international policies and measures, in particular those of an economic and financial character, should be judged in this light and accepted only in so far as they appear to promote and not to hinder the achievement of this fundamental objective;

(d) It is a responsibility of the International Labor Organization to examine and consider all international economic and financial policies and measures in the light of this fundamental objective;

(e) In discharging the tasks entrusted to it the International Labor Organization, having considered all relevant economic and financial factors, may include in its decision and recommendations any provisions which it considers appropriate.

III

The conference recognizes the solemn obligation of the International Labor Organization to further among the nations of the world programs which will achieve:

(a) Full employment and the raising of standards of living;

(b) The employment of workers in the occupations in which they can have the satisfaction of giving the fullest measure of their skill and attainments and make the best contribution to the common well-being;

(c) The provision, as a means to the attainment of this end and under adequate guarantees for all concerned, of facilities for training and the transfer of labor, including migration for employment and settlement;

(d) Policies in regard to wages and earnings, hours and other conditions of work calculated to insure a just share of the fruits of progress to all, and a minimum living wage to all employed and in need of such protection;

(e) The effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining, the cooperation of management and labor in the continuous improvement of productive efficiency, and the collaboration of workers and employers in the preparation and application of social and economic measures;

(f) The extension of social security measures to provide a basic income to all in need of such protection and comprehensive medical care;

(g) Adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations;

(h) Provision for child welfare and maternity protection;

(i) The provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture;

(j) The assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity.

IV

Confident that the fuller and broader utilization of the world's productive resources necessary for the attainment of the objective set forth in this declaration can be secured by effective international and national action, including measures to expand production and consumption, to avoid severe economic fluctuations, to promote the economic and social advancement of the less-developed regions of the world, to assure greater stability in world prices of primary products, and to promote a high and steady volume of international trade, the conference pledges the full cooperation of the International Labor Organization with such international bodies as may be entrusted with a share of the responsibility for this great task and for the promotion of the health, education and well-being of all peoples.

V

The conference affirms that the principles set forth in this declaration are fully applicable to all peoples everywhere and that, while the manner of their application must be determined with due regard to the stage of social and economic development reached by each people, their progressive application to peoples who are still dependent, as well as to those who have already achieved self-government, is a matter of concern to the whole civilized world.

Emphasizes Need For Full Employment And Security For Workers Everywhere

Philadelphia.—Delegates from 41 nations to the International Labor Organization's conference here adopted a broad charter of economic goals which emphasized that full employment and raising the standards of living of working people in every nation must be the civilized world's primary post-war objective.

This declaration, called the "Philadelphia Charter," recognized as a "solemn obligation" the responsibility of the ILO to further world-wide acceptance of the right of collective bargaining, a minimum living wage guarantee, the extension of social security and other measures to promote the health, education and economic well-being of all peoples.

Before adjourning, the ILO also adopted a statement on the social aims to be included in the peace treaty and to be applied immediately. This resolution, submitted originally by the United States delegation, listed the following 7 points as being of international as well as national concern:

1. Opportunity for useful and regular employment to all persons who want work, at fair wages or returns and under reasonable conditions, with provision for protection of health and against injury in all occupations.

2. Raising standards of living to provide adequate nutrition, housing, medical care and education.

3. Establishment of minimum standards of employment to prevent exploitation of workers, whether employed or self-employed, whose opportunities for high wage employment are limited.

4. Provision for child welfare.

5. Provision for a regular flow of income to all those whose normal income is interrupted by sickness or injury, by old age or by lack of employment opportunity.

6. The effective recognition of the right of freedom of association and of collective bargaining.

7. Provision of facilities for training and transfer of labor.

The ILO also sent a strong message to the enslaved peoples of the occupied countries of Europe promising them that their day of deliverance is not far off.

In his closing address to the conference, Frank Walker, minister to the United States for New Zealand and president of the conference, termed the Philadelphia Charter the greatest social document that has yet been published.

"It will not be worth the paper it is written on unless we have action," he added.

The ILO, in order to assure action on its recommendations, authorized its governing body to serve as the "watchdog" of world-wide employment, with the duty of calling a special conference of the ILO when and if a general unemployment situation develops.

The governing body, in its turn, at a meeting following the adjournment of the conference, directed a committee of nine to stand ready at all times to present the social viewpoint of the ILO at any international meetings held prior to the next ILO conference.

Three representatives of the United States, including Elbert J. Watt, American workers' delegate, were named to this committee.

Richer Post-War Economy Urged

Toledo.—Mobilization of the economic resources of the nation to attain maximum production and full employment in the post-war era was demanded by AFL President William Green at a mass meeting called by the Toledo Committee for the Organization of Peace at the Civic Auditorium.

"Full production and full employment at decent wages go hand in hand," Mr. Green said. "One cannot be maintained without the other. Mass unemployment is not only the result of business depression—it is the cause of it. Full employment is not only the result of business prosperity—it is the indispensable element in the attainment of prosperity.

"Labor has often been told in the past that only when conditions are good for business can the workers benefit. Now labor tells industry that only when conditions are good for workers can business benefit. Both statements are true."

Mr. Green urged abatement of Government regimentation over both business and labor after the war ends. He called for adoption of the Kilgore Bill to safeguard human rights in the post-war period. He also emphasized the need for enactment of a broader social security system.

Plans should be perfected immediately, he said, for the launching of a nation-wide housing and public works program as soon as war contracts are cancelled.

In a final plea for greater cooperation between management and labor, Mr. Green said:

"We are fighting this war to end oppression, to destroy totalitarianism and to establish lasting peace among the nations of the world. Let us likewise resolve to end oppression and aggression in the relations between management and labor at home. The United States must not be divided by internal warfare between capital and labor, between employer and worker."

GREEN TO SUBMIT PLANKS TO BOTH CONVENTIONS

Philadelphia. — President William Green will submit the platform recommendations of the American Federation of Labor personally to the conventions of both the Republican and Democratic parties by direction of the Executive Council.

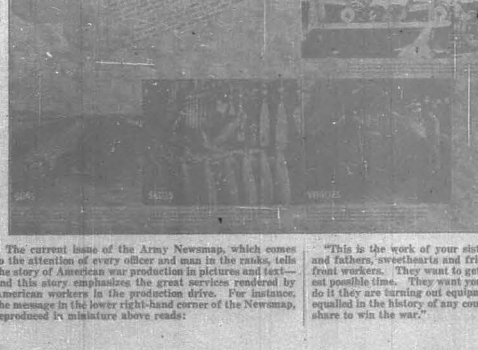
The labor planks will be drafted by the members of the Council who reside in Washington. Mr. Green then will take them to Chicago to urge their acceptance by both major parties.

AFL WINS BIG ELECTION AT PRATT-WHITNEY PLANT

Kansas City.—Obtaining the votes of almost 87 percent of the workers at the huge Pratt & Whitney airplane engine plant here, which will eventually employ more than 25,000, the International Association of Machinists won a significant NLRB election from the CIO which received only 25 per cent of the votes.

The AFL organizing campaign at the plant, which was crowned with victory, was a joint effort in which the Building Trades Council, the Central Labor Union and AFL staff organizers united with IAM organizers to enlist support of the workers.

Army Newsmap Hails Labor's Exploits



The current issue of the Army Newsmap, which comes to the attention of every officer and man in the ranks, tells the story of American war production in pictures and text—and this story emphasizes the great services rendered by American workers in the production drive. For instance, the message in the lower right-hand corner of the Newsmap, reproduced in miniature above reads:

"This is the work of your sister, and brothers, mothers and fathers, sweethearts and friends. They are the home front workers. They want to get the war over in the shortest possible time. They want you home safe and whole. To do it they are turning out equipment at a rate never before equalled in the history of any country. They are doing their share to win the war."

VETERAN LABOR PIONEER DIES AT EIGHTY-FIVE

Tacoma, Wash.—C. O. "Dad" Young, founder of the labor movement in the Northwest, died at his home in Day Island at the age of 85, after a long life of accomplishment.

He was honored and respected not only by labor but by everyone in the community. When he first set out to organize unions for the American Federation of Labor in this section of the country forty years ago, many forces were arrayed against him, including employers, newspapers and public officials. He succeeded in overcoming this antagonism by strict adherence to the principles of trade unionism.

The well-loved veteran of the labor movement is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Walter A. Carlson and a son, Herbert S. Young.

AFL CHEMICAL WORKERS WIN POLL, FROM UMW

Albany, N. Y.—The American Federation of Labor won a hotly contested election for the right to represent the workers of the Hayes Aspirin Company's plant, Organizer John Schrier reported to President William Green.

The AFL union received 424 votes to 391 for District 50 of the United Mine Workers. The result gives added stimulus to the AFL campaign to organize chemical workers and to chatter an international union in this field.